



OFFICERS

President

Chuck Washington
Riverside County

1st Vice President

Bruce Gibson
San Luis Obispo County

2nd Vice President

Jeff Griffiths
Inyo County

Past President

Ed Valenzuela
Siskiyou County



CEO

Graham Knaus

March 23, 2023

The Honorable Tasha Boerner Horvath
Chair, California Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee
1020 N Street, Room 169
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 286 (Wood) Broadband infrastructure: mapping - SUPPORT
As Introduced January 24, 2023
Set for hearing March 29, 2023

Dear Assemblymember Boerner Horvath:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC), representing all 58 counties in the state, is pleased to support Assembly Bill 286 by Assemblymember Wood. This bill would improve the California Public Utilities Commission's (CPUC) statewide broadband map by increasing transparency, granularity, and accuracy for household broadband service data.

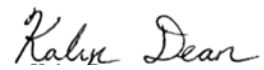
Current broadband maps express broadband access at the census-block level, despite the Federal Communications Commission's (FCC) broadband maps expressing broadband access at the address level. These maps, which are created and maintained by the CPUC gather feedback but do not incorporate that data into the publicly available maps. These publicly available broadband maps fail to fully illustrate the digital divide preventing millions of Californians from receiving broadband. Maps today are painted with a broad brush of served versus unserved, with no detail regarding what might be keeping a household offline. Today's maps only reflect where Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have the capacity to serve an address, essentially serving as a one-dimensional map that provides no context as to why a household remains offline.

AB 286 will close a loophole that allows the CPUC to solicit feedback about problems with the existing map, but not to commit to upgrading the map with crowdsourced data correction. The FCC's new maps (which are far from perfect) rely on 200 sources of data. As acknowledged by the federal agency, the providers alone cannot provide the necessary level of data granularity. Accepting and integrating alternate sources of data is crucial to achieving the goals of California's public broadband maps and digital equity plan.

CSAC strongly supports policies and programs that ensure all Californians have access to high quality, affordable internet services. Internet access must be treated as a right for all Californians and not just a luxury for some. For these reasons, we are pleased to support AB

286 and respectfully urge your support. If you have any questions about our position, please do not hesitate to contact me at kdean@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kalyn M. Dean".

Kalyn M. Dean
Legislative Advocate

cc: Will Tesconi, Field Representative, Office of Assemblymember Jim Wood:
will.tesconi@asm.ca.gov
Members and Staff, Assembly Communications and Conveyance Committee